

COMICO



JONNNY QuestTM

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This issue is especially close to my heart and I think, once you've read it, you'll feel the same. Whereas, in the original run of *Jonny Quest*, Hanna-Barbera gave us the introduction of Hadji, we never did learn how Race Bannon came to be a part of the Quest team — nor was mention ever made of Jonny's mother. I was curious, **Bill Loebs** was curious, so we decided to tackle the subject — though, truth be told, Bill did most of the tackling and

I just kinda went along for the ride! In the final analysis, everyone involved with this issue sweated bullets over its production — for a variety of reasons, not the least of which was the ever-impending deadline — and a tip of ye editor's cap is due to each member of the creative crew for a job well done, and on time!

You know how it is to be 31 years old, a little jaded, to read scripts every day as part of your job, and *still* to be knocked over on your

backside by the quiet power of a writer's vision? Take it from me — it's a rare and exciting event. But it happened when I first read this issue — many months ago — and I guess I realized, then, just how insanely talented a writer **Bill Loebs** is, and I knew, then, that we were very lucky to have him at the writing helm of **JONNY QUEST**.

Brace yourselves — and watch out for your backside!

— Diana Schutz

CREATOR PROFILES

WENDY PINI

Wendy Pini is best known for *ELFQUEST*, the 20-part epic she created and self-published with husband Richard. Originally published in black-and-white, *ELFQUEST* has been reprinted in various formats by Marvel Comics and Donning's Starblaze Graphics division. The success of *ELFQUEST* led to the formation of *WaRP* Graphics, a major independent comics publisher. Other *ELFQUEST* products include limited edition portfolios and an illustrated novel published by Playboy Press. Beyond *ELFQUEST*, Wendy has painted many covers for science fiction magazines such as *GALAXY*, co-scripted *RED SONJA* #6 with Roy Thomas, and published art and stories in *EPIC ILLUSTRATED*.

JOE STATON

After cutting his teeth at Charlton drawing many ghost stories and co-creating *E-MAN*, Joe Staton graduated to the ranks of Marvel and DC and lent his unique style to such titles as *THE INCREDIBLE HULK*, *JUSTICE SOCIETY*, *AVENGERS*, *SUPERMAN*, *BATMAN*, *METAL MEN*, and *PLASTIC MAN*. After several years with First Comics, where he was instrumental in that company's formation, served as First's art director, and resurrected *E-MAN*, Joe resumed his freelance status and returned to DC where he is now drawing *GREEN LANTERN*. Other recent work includes *THE P.I.'s* mini-series featuring Ms. Tree and Mike Mauser, and three issues of *AMERICAN FLAGG!* following the departure of Howard Chaykin.

RICK TAYLOR

After graduating with the very first class ever to attend the Joe Kubert School of Cartoon and Graphic Art, Rick Taylor returned to the midwest where he worked at a variety of art jobs before joining First Comics. Now serving as First's production manager, Rick has provided letters, inks, and colors for such titles as *GRIMJACK*, *BADGER*, and *DYNAMO JOE*, and backup features such as *BLACK FLAME*, *MUNDEN'S BAR*, *CLONEZONE*, and Bill Willingham's *OUTRIDER* feature in *WARP*. He also contributed his coloring talents to Comico's *ROBOTECH THE MACROSS SAGA* #6, #7, #9.

Adam Kubert painted this issue's pin-up page, but we'll save his profile for *JONNY QUEST* #6, wherein he pencils, inks, letters, and colors the entire issue!

WILLIAM F. MESSNER-LOEBS
WRITER
WENDY PINI · **JOE STATON**
PENCILLER · INKER
BOB PINAHA · **RICK TAYLOR**
LETTERER · COLORIST
DIANA SCHUTZ
EDITOR

SPRINGTIME IN THE FLORIDA KEYS... WHEN
QUEST LABORATORIES IS SCRUBBED IN
SUNLIGHT AND ALL OUTDOORS
BECOMES A SCHOOLROOM...

"SO, PEACEFUL
ATTEMPTS AT REFORM
DIED ALL OVER
EUROPE..."

"...AND 1848 IS
CALLED 'THE TURNING
POINT AT WHICH HISTORY
FAILED TO TURN.'"

Enter RACE BANNON

THIS OTTO VON
BISMARCK JOKER DECIDED
THE ONLY WAY GERMANY WAS
GOING TO BE UNITED AND
REFORMED WAS
THROUGH
"BLOOD AND
IRON"!

I GUESS
THAT'S WHY
THEY CALLED HIM
"THE BLOODY
CHANCELLOR."

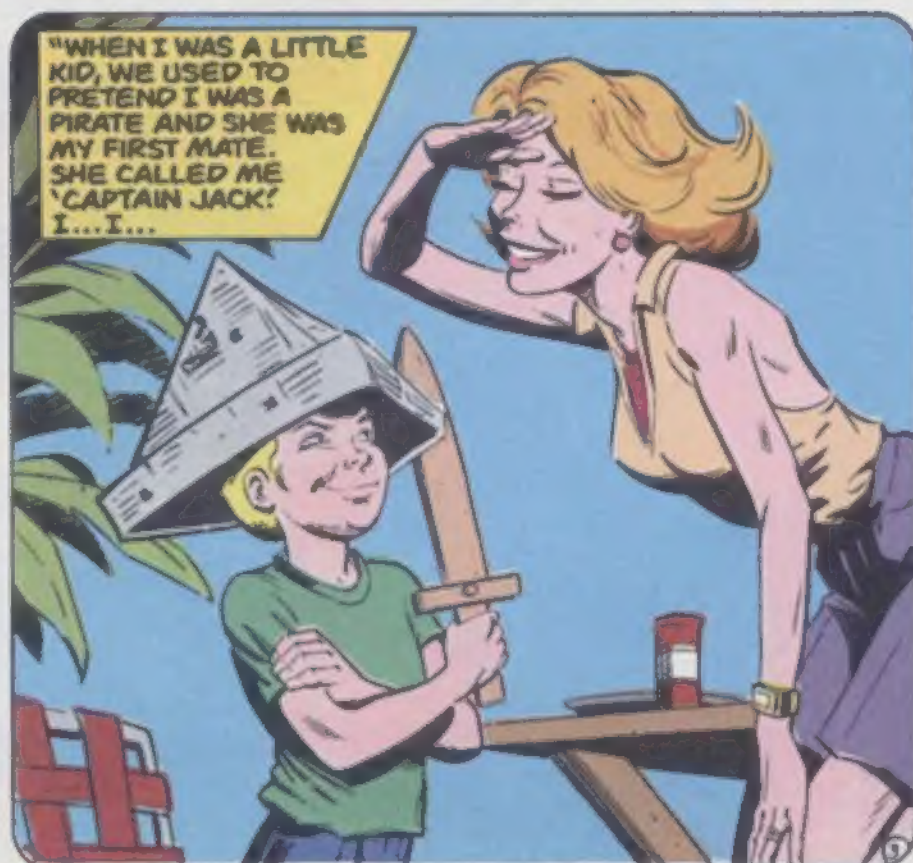
THAT'S
ENOUGH
FOR TODAY,
TOUGH
GUYS.

LET'S
COOL OFF
FOR AN
HOUR.

WASN'T
BISMARCK CALLED
"THE IRON
CHANCELLOR"?

THAT'S WHAT I
THOUGHT.



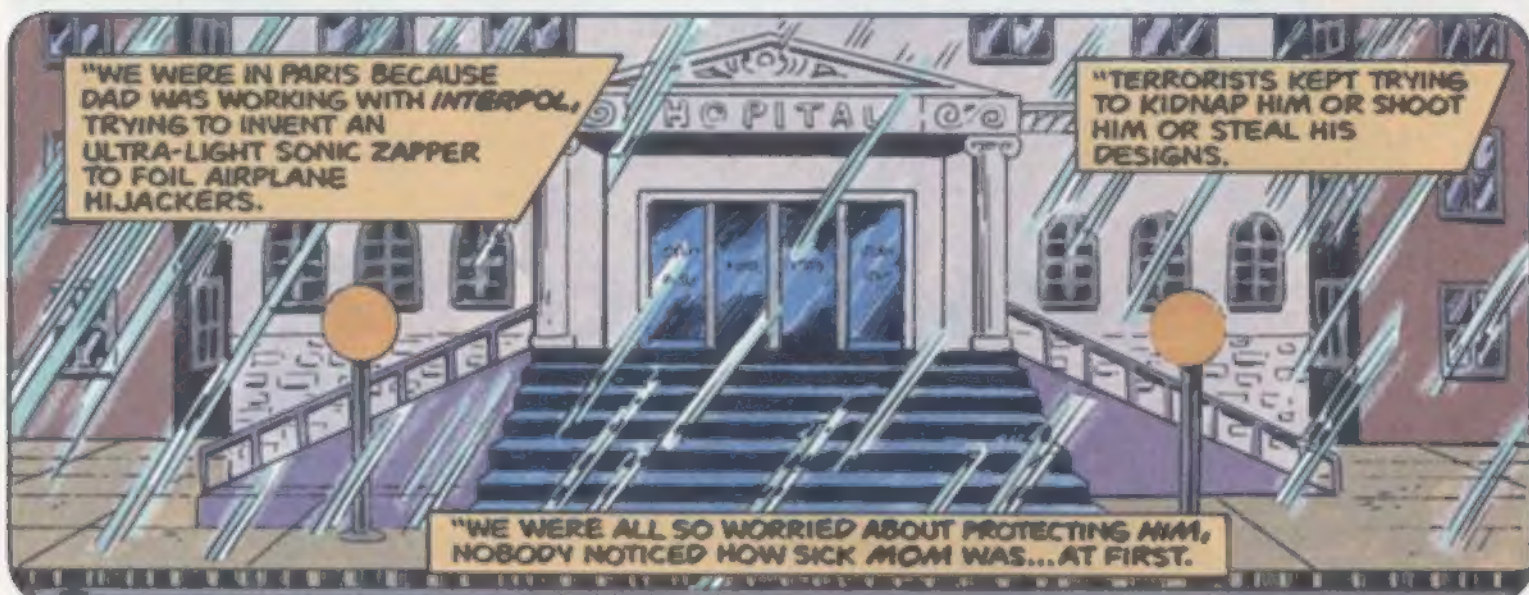




"I... REMEMBER...
IT WAS IN PARIS."

"DAD SAYS IT DIDN'T RAIN ALL
THE TIME... BUT THAT'S ALL
I REMEMBER."

"PARIS IS AN
UGLY CITY."



"WE WERE IN PARIS BECAUSE
DAD WAS WORKING WITH INTERPOL,
TRYING TO INVENT AN
ULTRA-LIGHT SONIC ZAPPER
TO FOIL AIRPLANE
HIJACKERS."

"TERRORISTS KEPT TRYING
TO KIDNAP HIM OR SHOOT
HIM OR STEAL HIS
DESIGNS."

"WE WERE ALL SO WORRIED ABOUT PROTECTING MOM,
NOBODY NOTICED HOW SICK MOM WAS... AT FIRST."



"I HATED PARIS."

"I DO NOT KNOW WHAT ELSE
WE CAN DO, MONSIEUR QUEST.
WE ARE MONITORING HER
CLOSELY, BUT..."

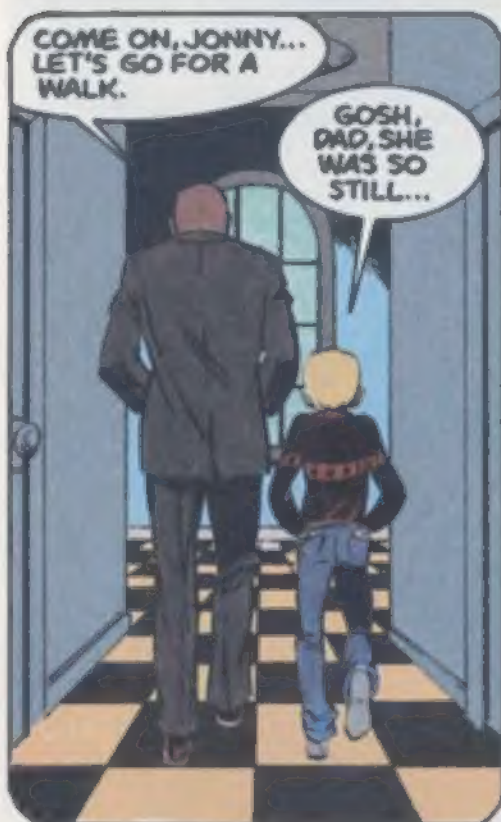


THERE'S NO OTHER TREATMENT?

NO...SHE WILL BE INTERMITTENTLY CONSCIOUS...



...BE WITH HER AS MUCH AS YOU CAN.



COME ON, JONNY... LET'S GO FOR A WALK.

GOSH, DAD, SHE WAS SO STILL...



JONNY, DID YOU... UNDERSTAND WHAT THE DOCTOR SAID?

HE MEANS MOM'S NOT... GOING TO GET ANY BETTER, DOESN'T HE? AND HE'S NOT GOING TO DO ANYTHING.



THERE'S NOTHING HE CAN DO, SON.

IS SHE... IS SHE IN PAIN, DAD?

NO, SON. NOT NOW.



YOU KNOW, SHE WOULD HAVE SOMETHING FUNNY TO SAY ABOUT ALL THIS...

...HOW THE HOSPITAL GOWNS AREN'T IN FASHION...

...OR THE COOKING ISN'T FOUR-STAR...

OÙ EST MON FRÈRE, MAXIM...?

JE LE SUIVAIS... DO YOU SPEAK ENGLISH?

I'M LOOKING FOR MY BROTHER, MAXIM.

I'M SURE HE'S HERE--I SAW HIM WALK IN.

SHE WAS ALWAYS LAUGHING...

"SHE WAS LAUGHING WHEN WE MET. SHE WAS A DEBUTANTE THAT YEAR... JUDITH WATERSTON OF THE BOSTON WATERSTONS.

"I WAS A NOBODY BY HER STANDARDS... A POOR GRADUATE STUDENT STRUGELING WITH A MASTER'S THESIS.

"HER FAMILY DIDN'T... APPRECIATE OUR GETTING MARRIED... BUT JUDITH LIVED ON MY SALARY WITHOUT COMPLAINT.

"THEN, FOR OUR FIRST ANNIVERSARY, WE EXCHANGED GIFTS. I GAVE HER A WATCH... SHE GAVE ME A LABORATORY.

"I DON'T THINK I EVER REALLY UNDERSTOOD HOW WEALTHY SHE WAS UNTIL THAT MOMENT.

"BUT THE GREATEST GIFT SHE EVER
GAVE ME WAS THE ABILITY
NOT TO TAKE MYSELF
SO SERIOUSLY."



"I WAS A SOLEMN YOUNG GENIUS, GRIMLY
DETERMINED TO SAVE HUMANITY BEFORE I WAS
THIRTY. SHE REFUSED TO LET ME BELIEVE I WAS
IN CHARGE OF THE
FATE OF THE
WORLD."



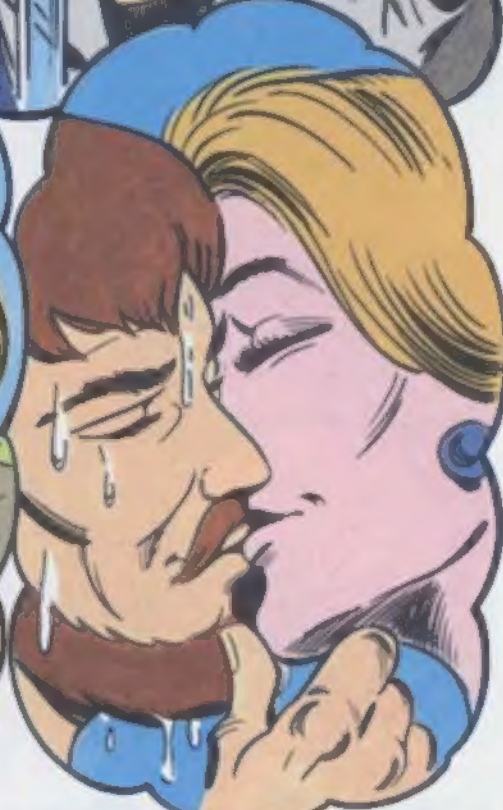
"GOSH, DAD, THAT
DOESN'T SOUND LIKE
A GREAT PRESENT."



"...IT REALLY IS."



"OH, BUT IT IS, SON..."



IT'S FUNNY--I GOT MORE
WORK DONE WHEN SHE WAS
TEASING ME THAN I EVER
DID IN A QUIET,
STERILE LAB.

NOW I CAN'T
CONCENTRATE...
CAN'T WORK...

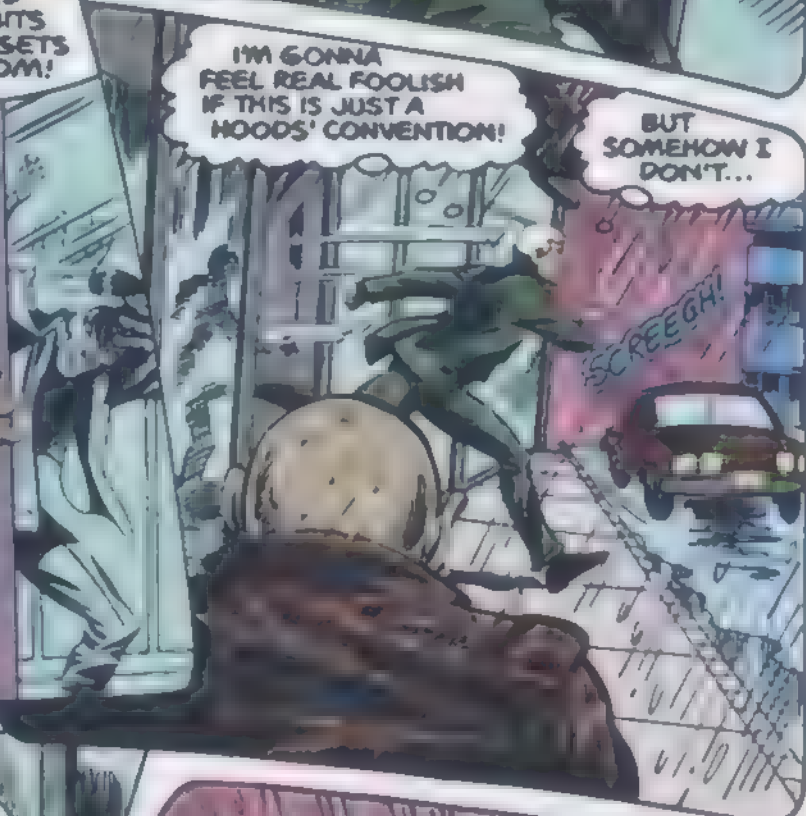
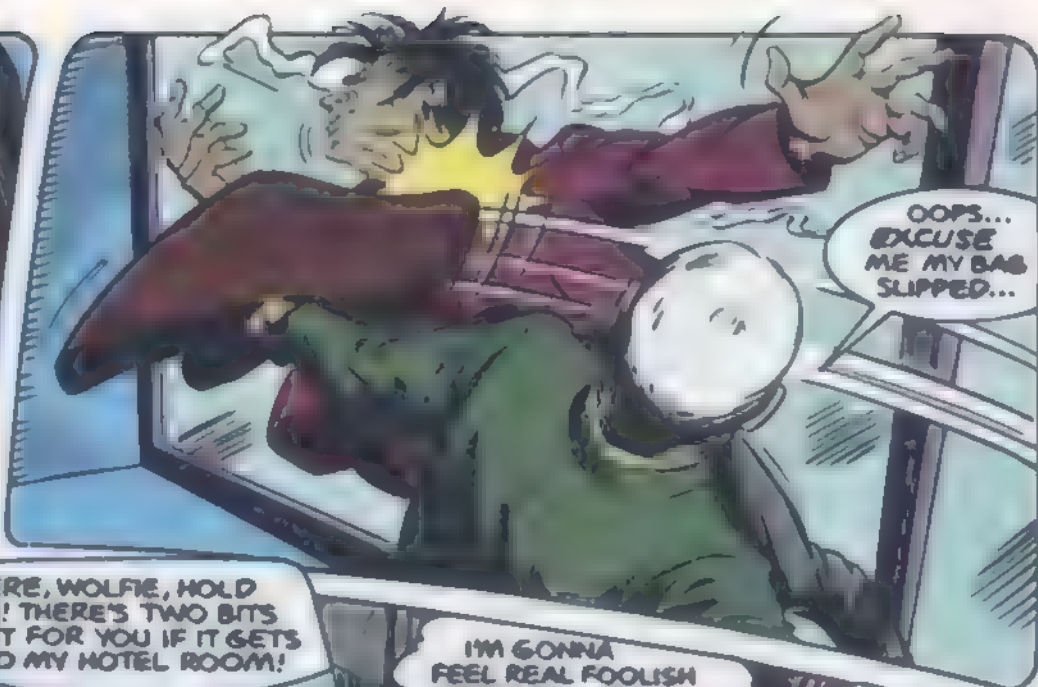


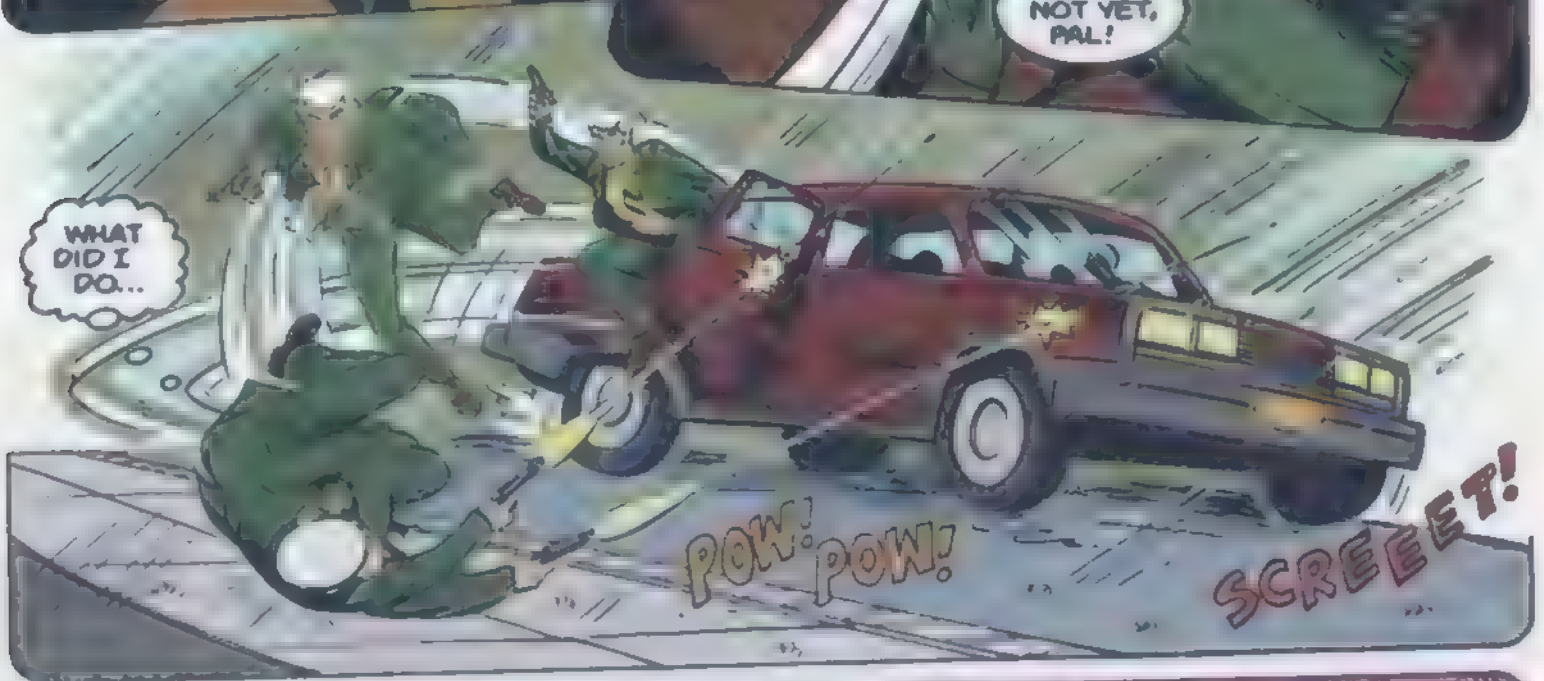
DAD, DO YOU
THINK THE TERRORISTS
ARE GOING TO TRY
AND KIDNAP YOU
AGAIN?

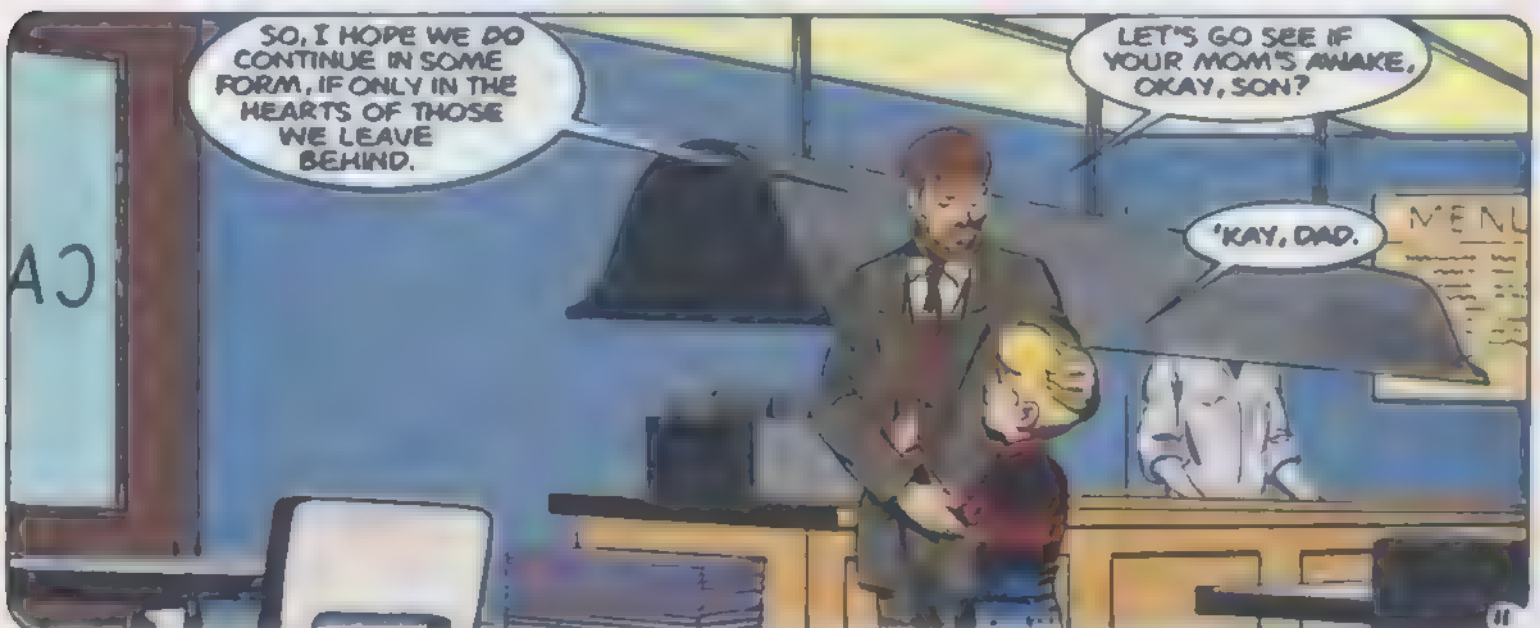
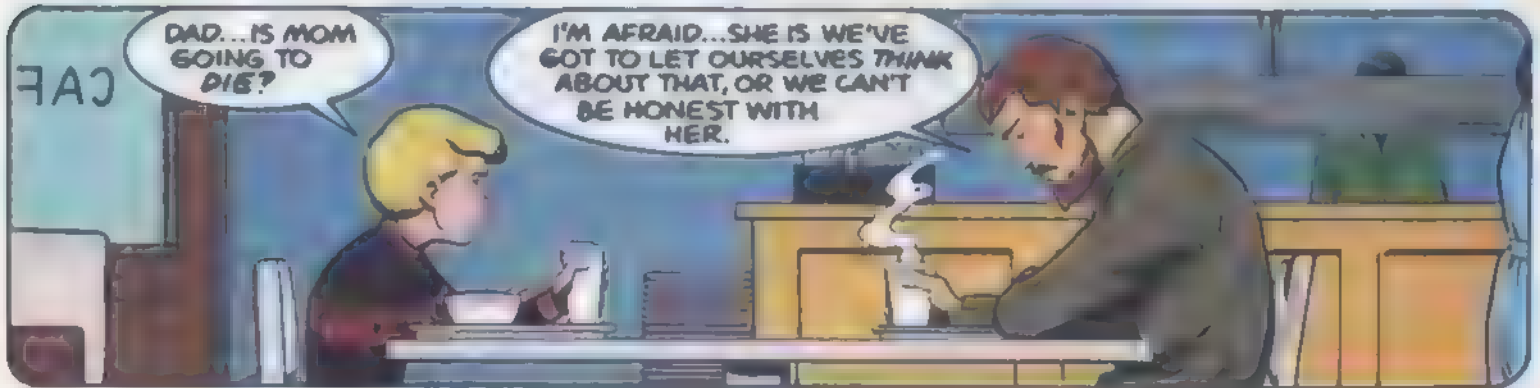
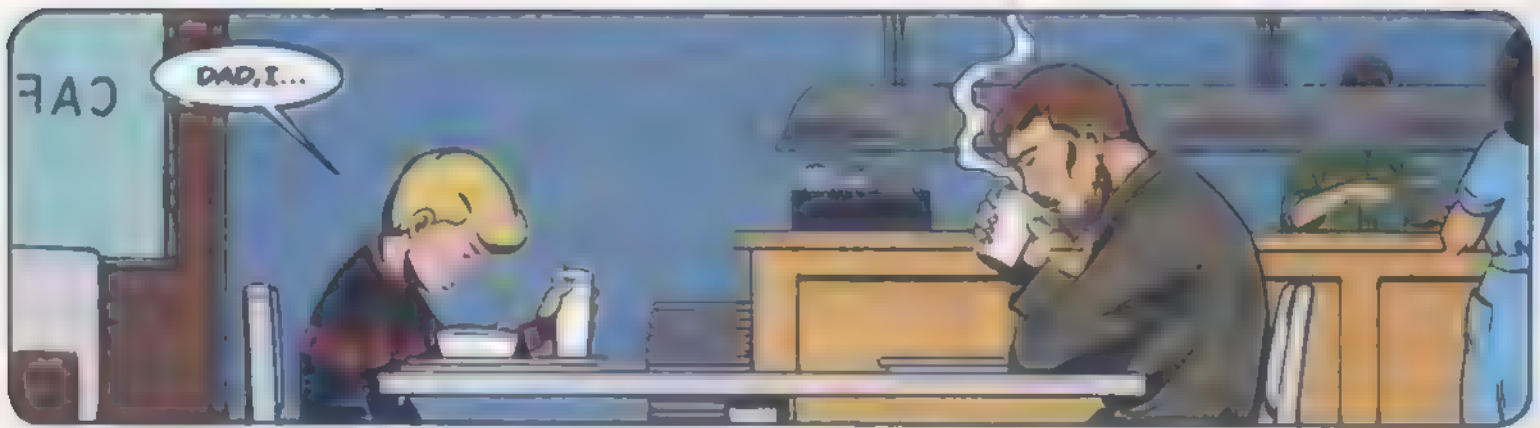
I DON'T
KNOW, SON, BUT
WASHINGTON IS
SENDING ONE OF
THEIR BEST AGENTS,
A ROGER
BANNON, TO
PROTECT
US.











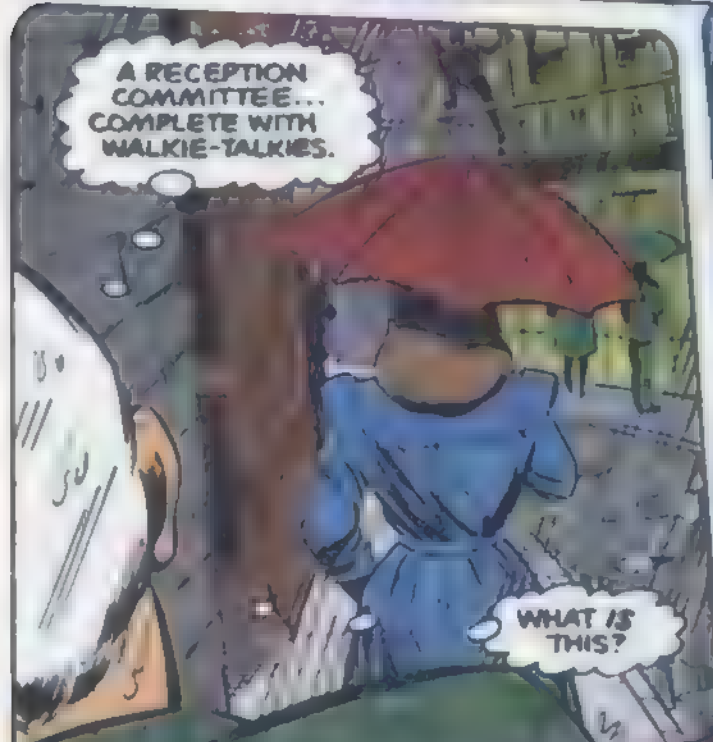


THOSE GUYS
KNEW I WAS
COMING IN.

THIS HAS
TO BE SOMETHING
BIG.



I... I FEEL
LIKE ~~SARDINE~~.
I TOOK HALF OF
THAT HYPO-- BUT
THAT WAS ALMOST
ENOUGH...



A RECEPTION
COMMITTEE...
COMPLETE WITH
WALKIE-TALKIES.

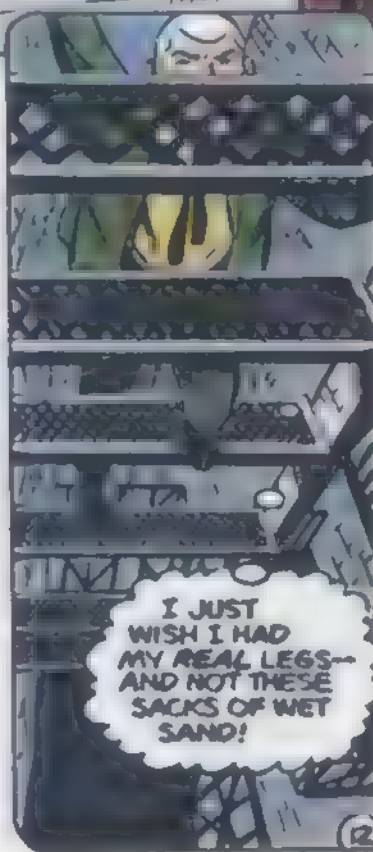
WHAT IS
THIS?



I'VE GOT
TO BUY SOME
TIME... GET
OUT OF
SIGHT...



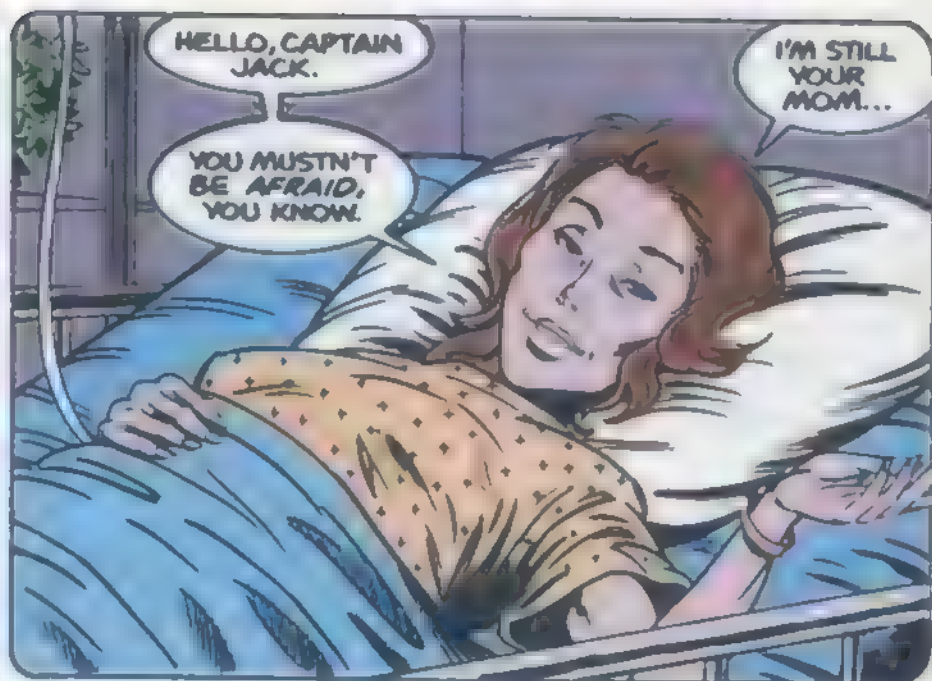
THERE'S AN IDEA...
IF I CAN GET UP ON THE
ROOFTOPS AND TRAVEL OVER
A FEW BLOCKS, I CAN SHAKE
THOSE MONKEYS.



I JUST
WISH I HAD
MY REAL LEGS--
AND NOT THESE
SACKS OF WET
SAND!



MOM... I...
ARE YOU
AWAKE?



HELLO, CAPTAIN
JACK.

YOU MUSTN'T
BE AFRAID,
YOU KNOW.

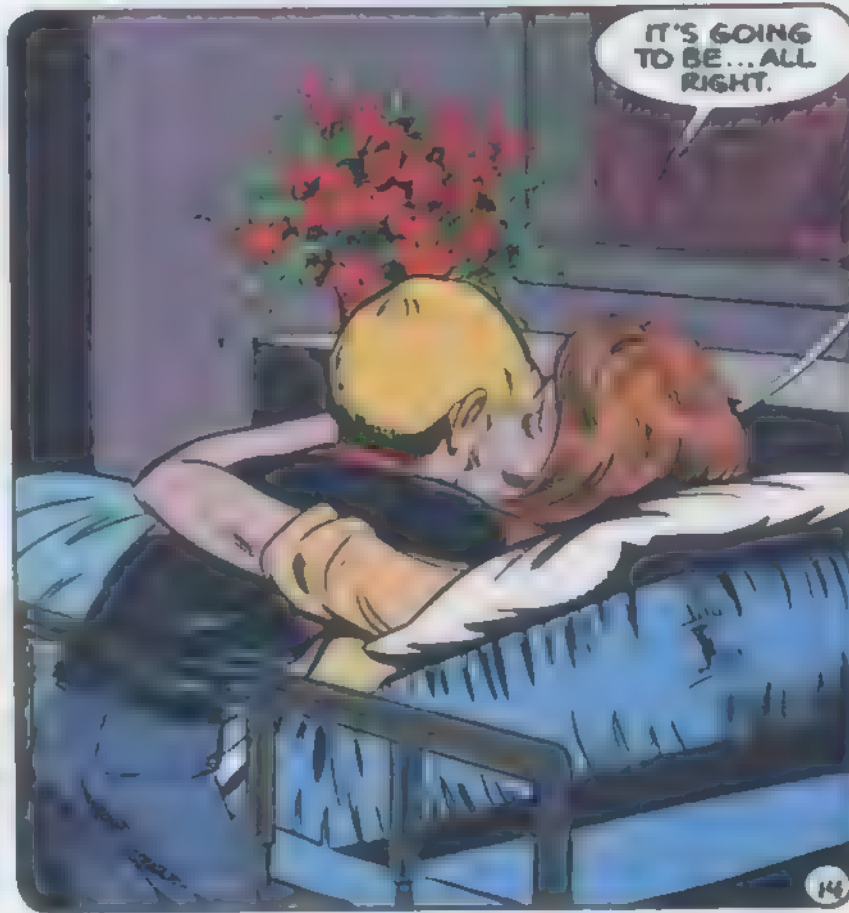
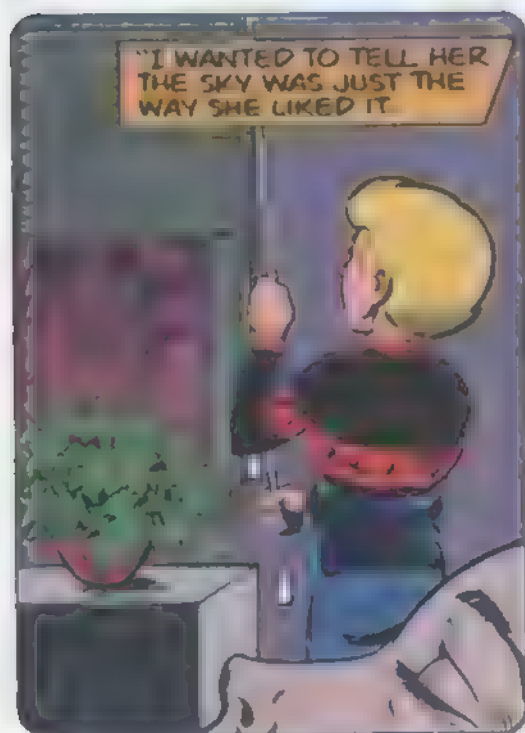
I'M STILL
YOUR
MOM...

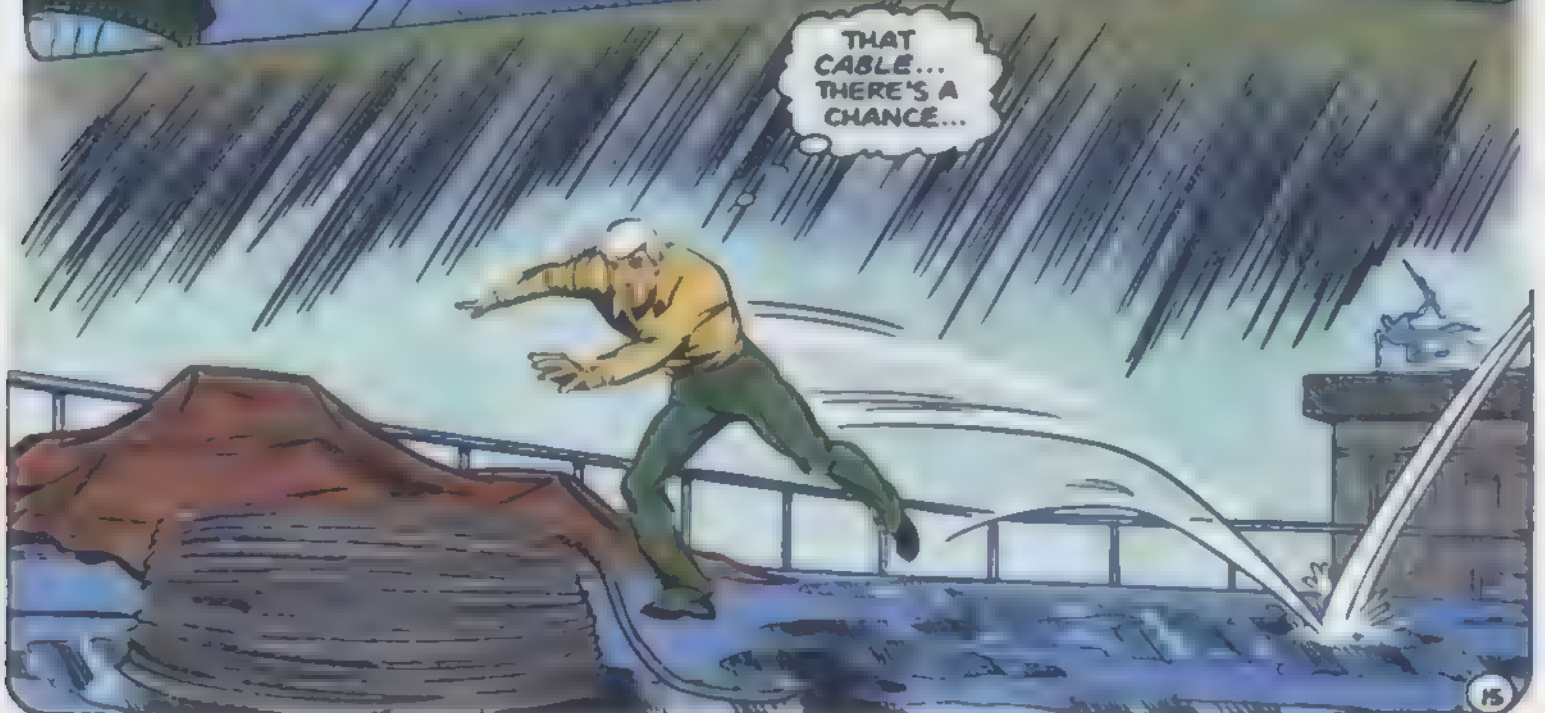
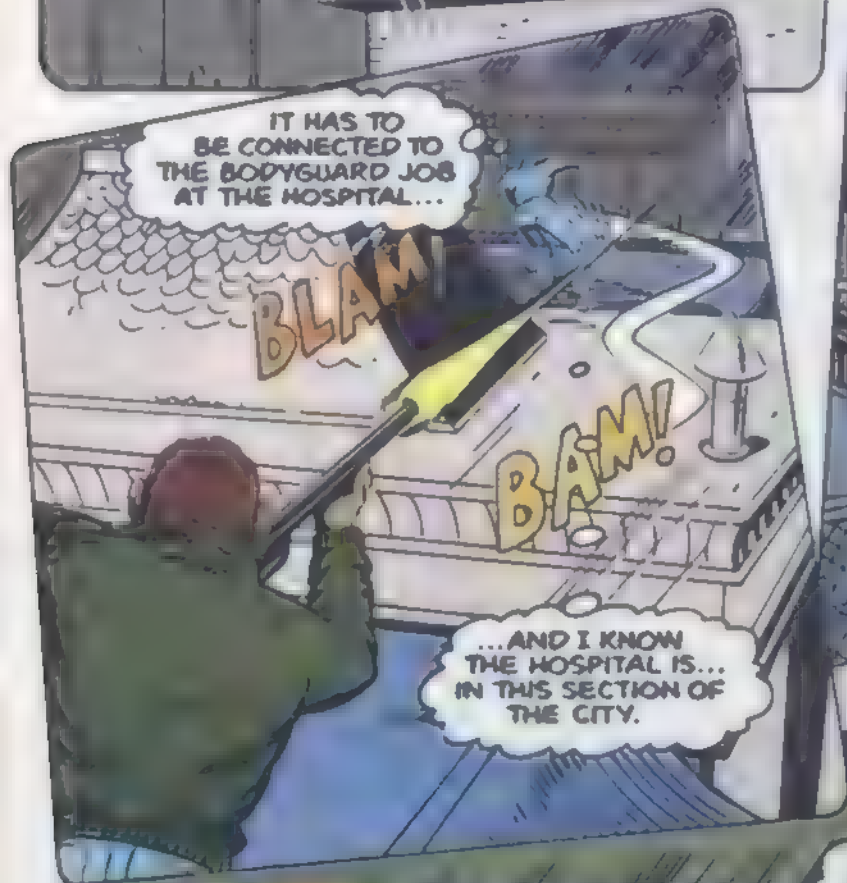


... AND THIS... SILLINESS... THAT'S HAPPENING
TO ME... WHY, IT'S JUST ANOTHER ADVENTURE--
AND YOU KNOW HOW I LOVE
ADVENTURES, DON'T YOU?

YES, MOM.

YOU'RE A FINE
BOY, AND I WANT YOU
TO REMEMBER... ALWAYS...
HOW VERY, VERY PROUD
I AM OF YOU.



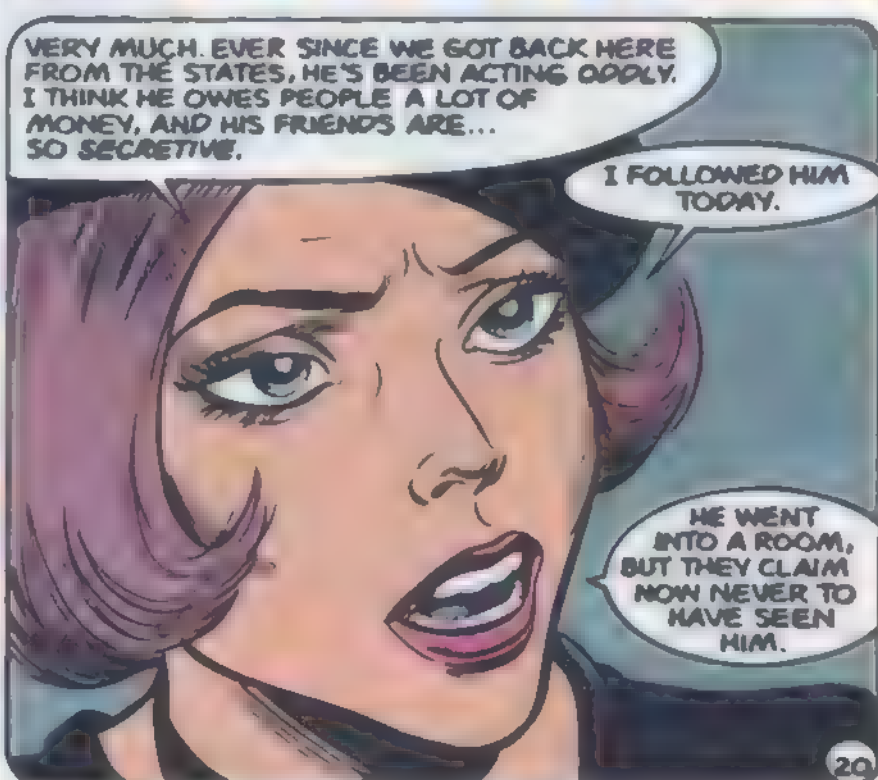
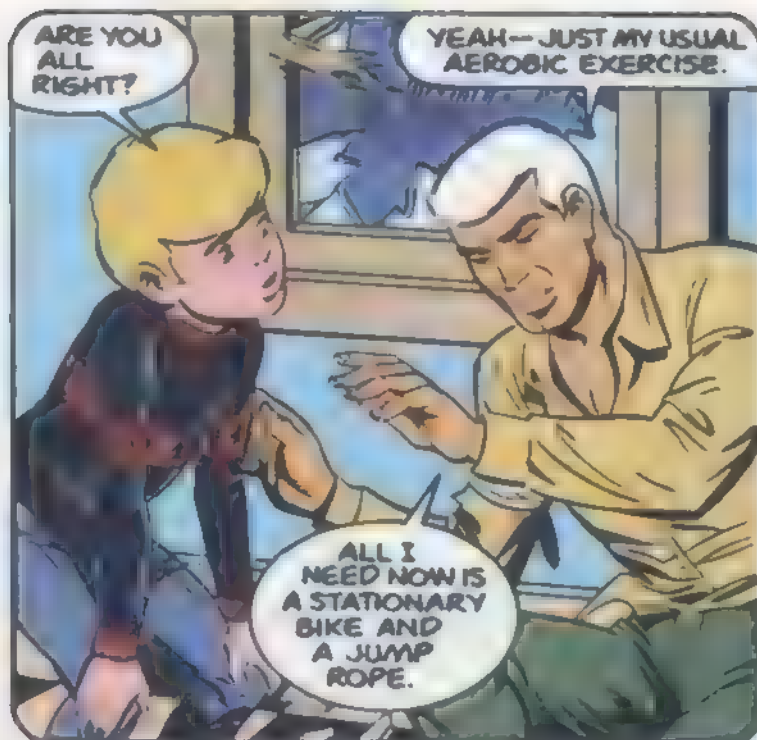


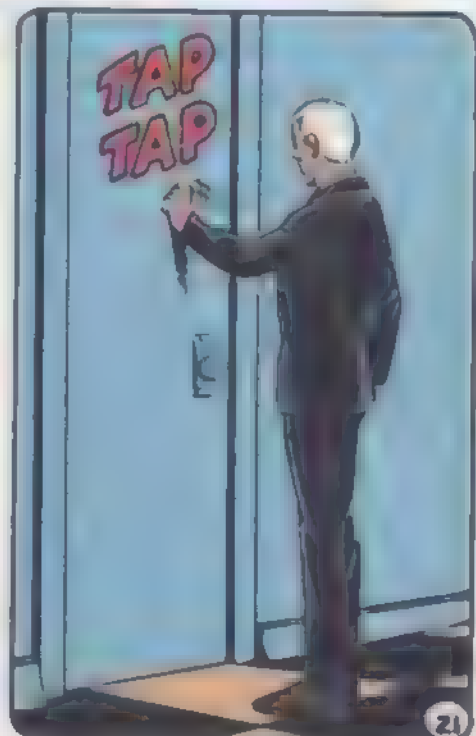
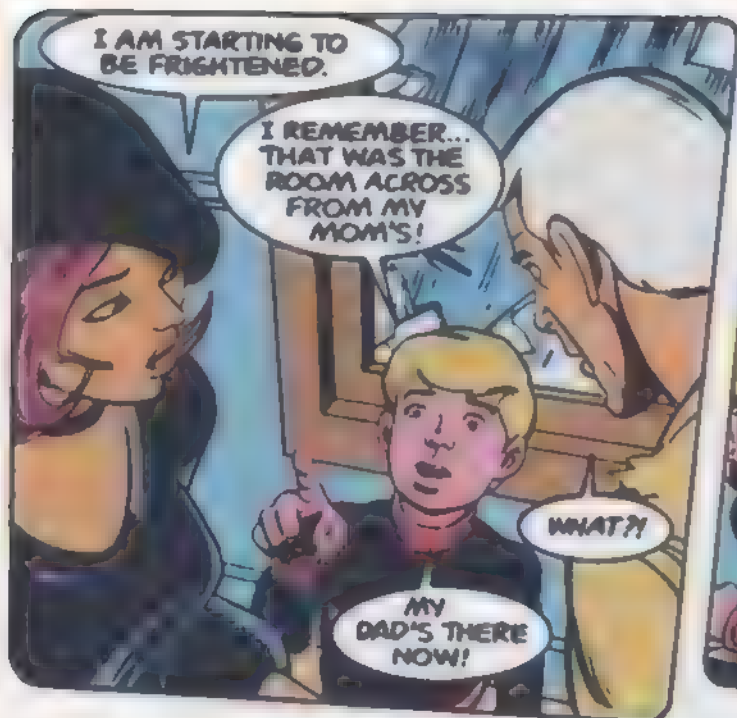


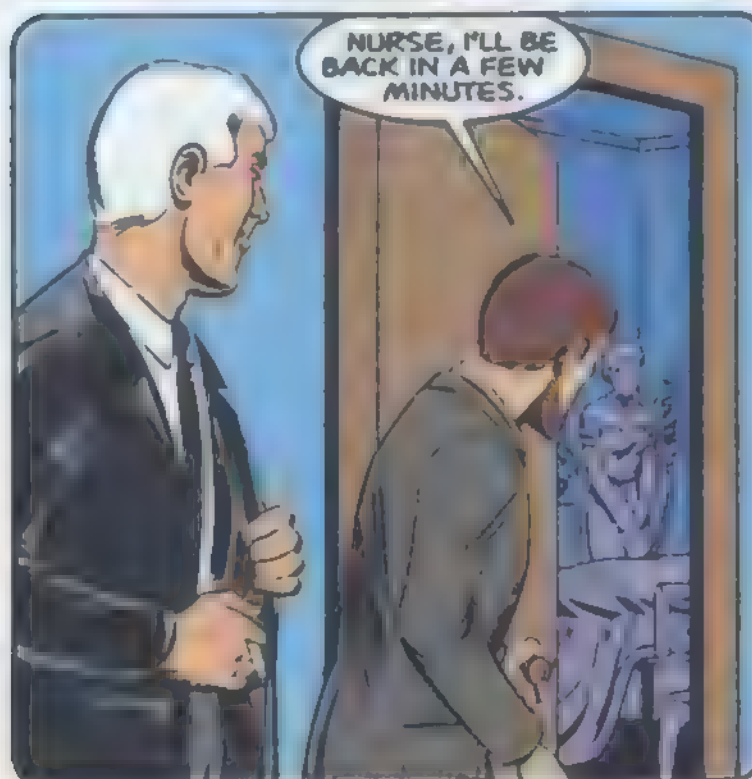
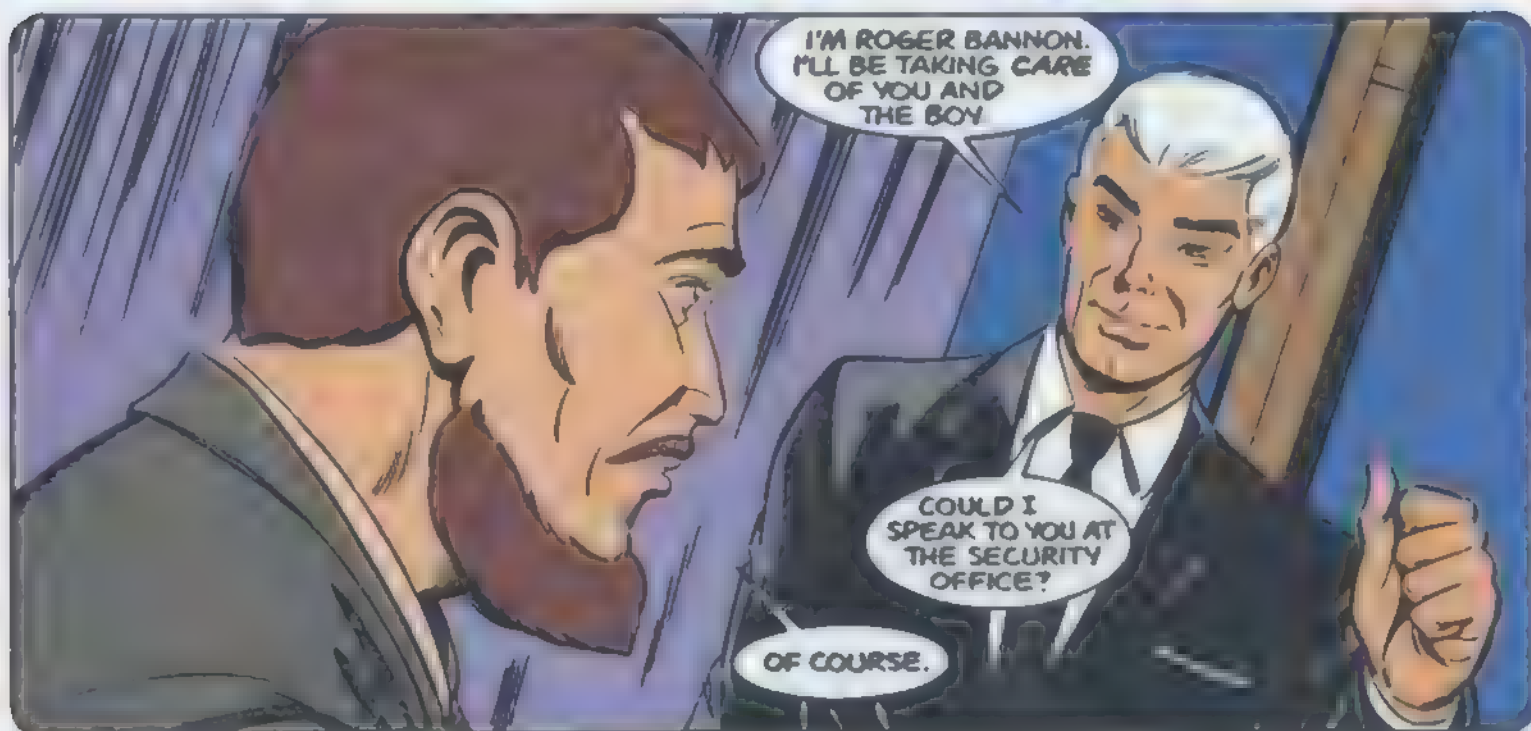


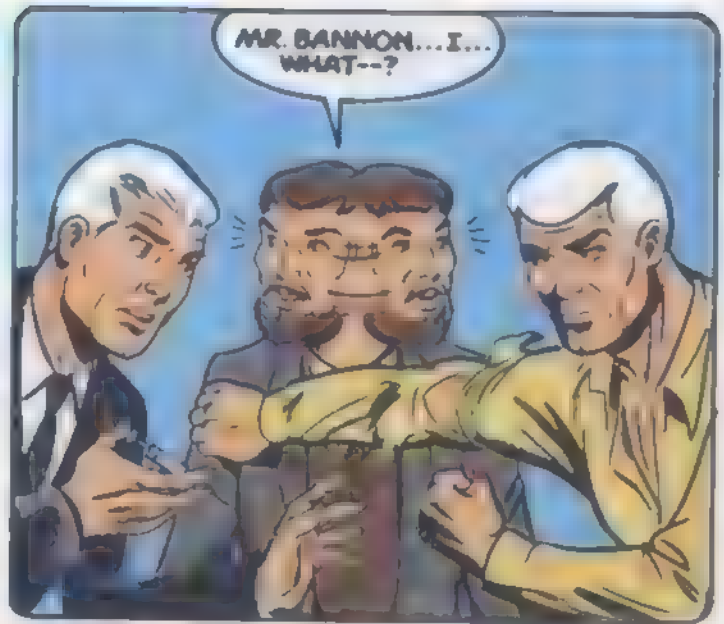




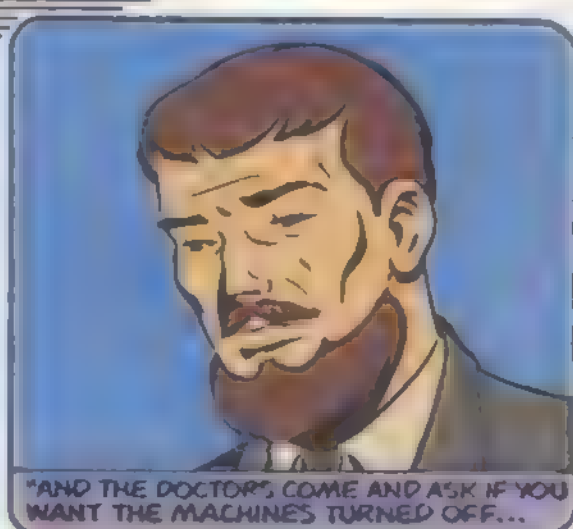
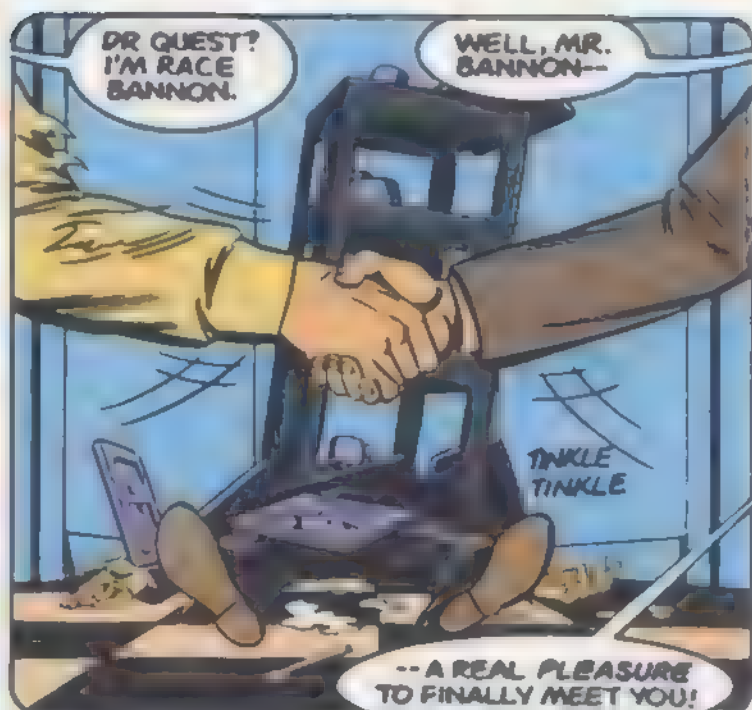
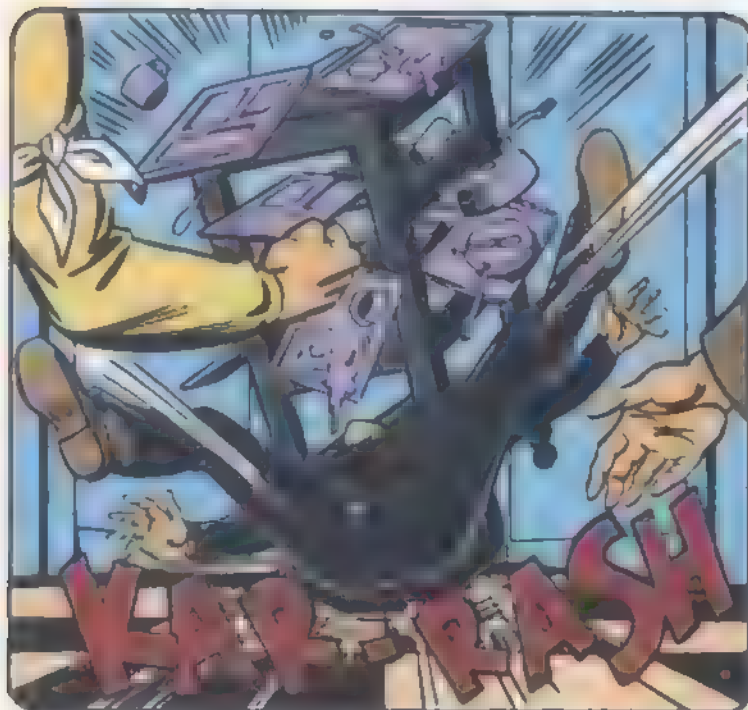


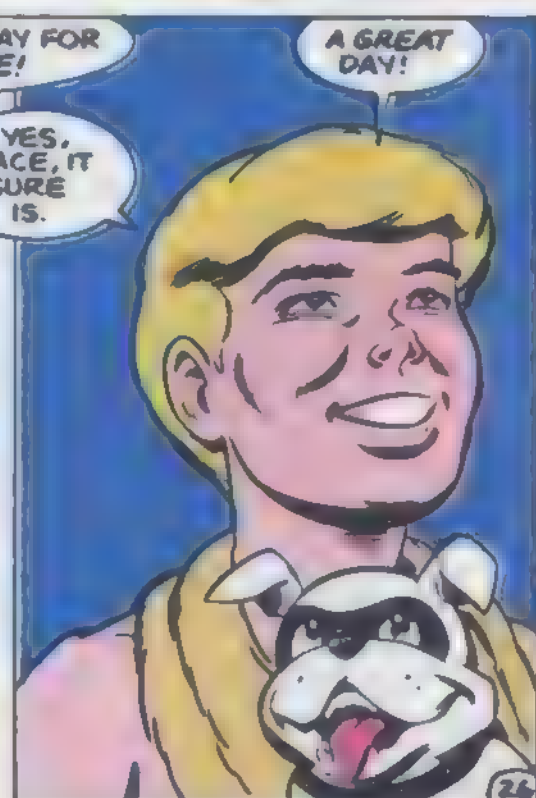
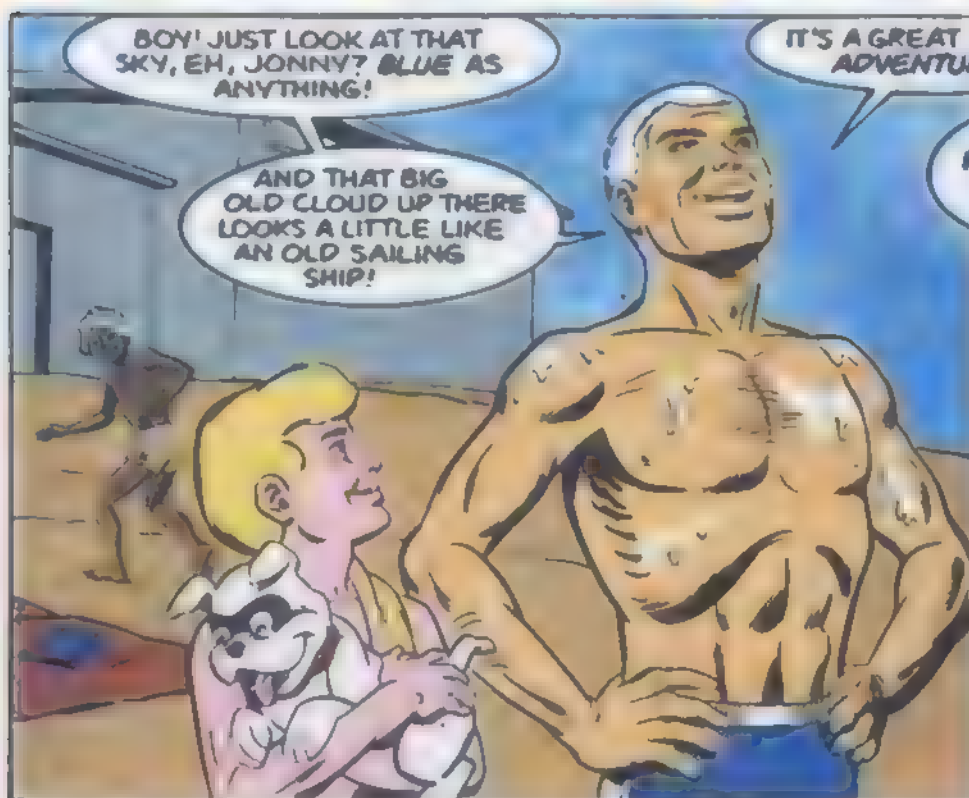
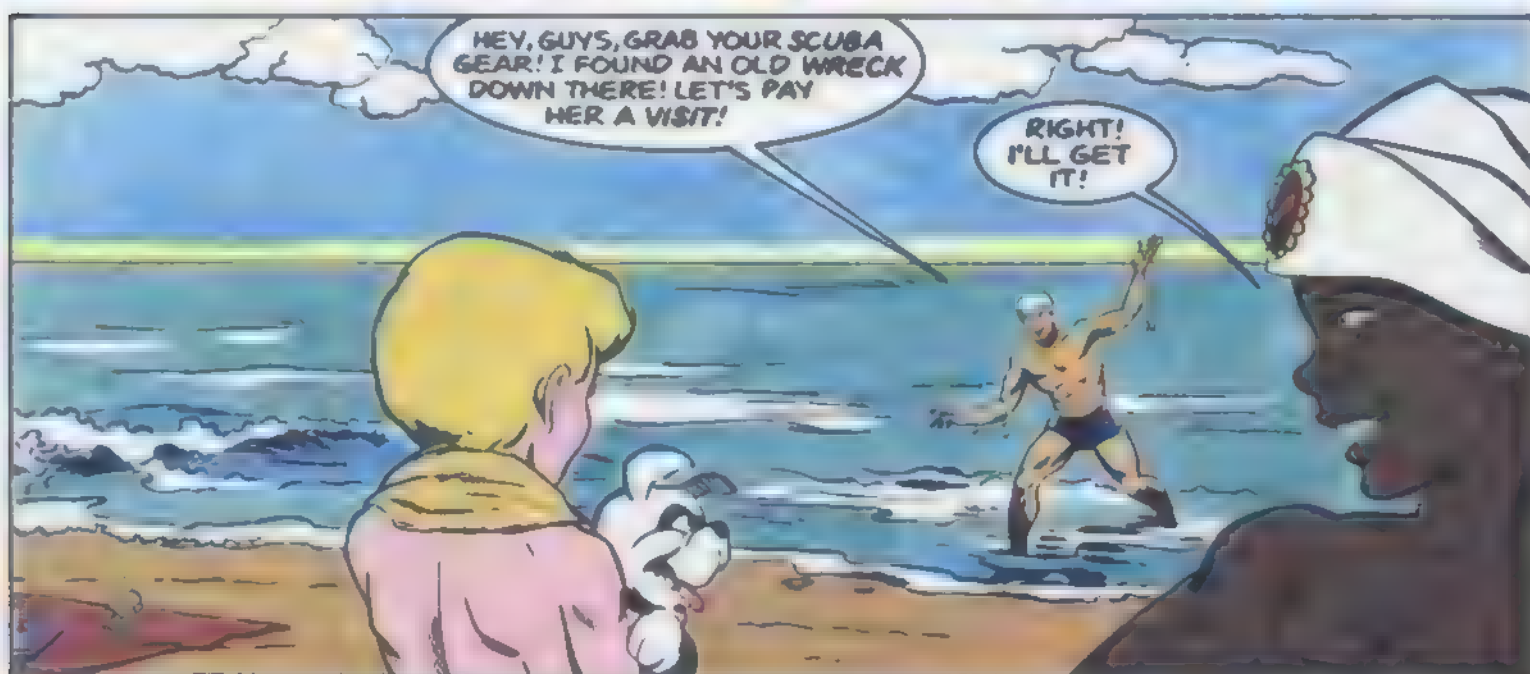
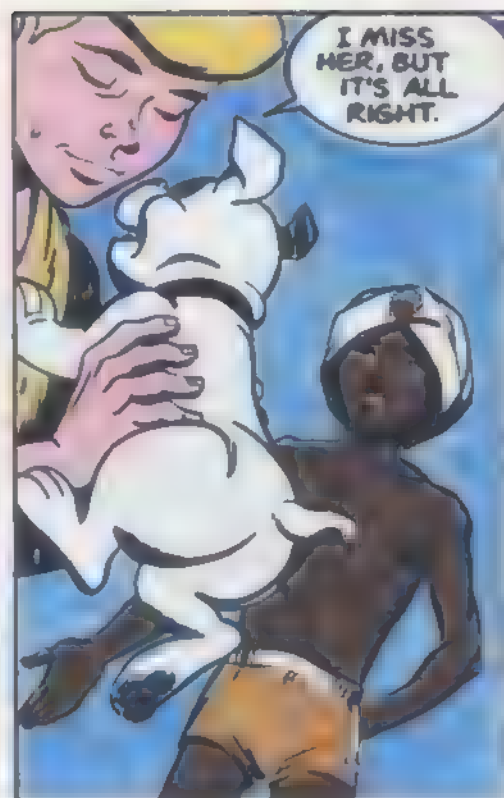
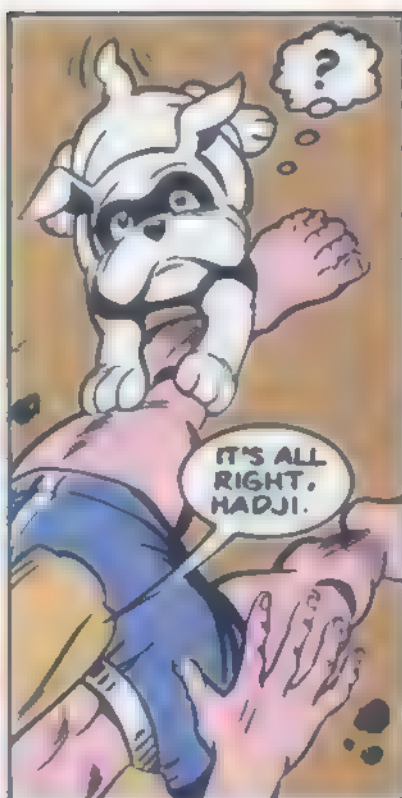















Questions and ANSWERS

1547 DeKALB STREET

NORRISTOWN, PA 19401

JONNY QUEST has perhaps been the most highly anticipated book to appear from Comico in 1986. As I write, the first issue hasn't even hit the stands, and the response—through letters and at conventions—has already been simply overwhelming! We knew we were in for a lively and entertaining letters column, so decided to get the ball rolling early by sending out advance black-and-white copies of JONNY QUEST #1 to some of the industry's most discerning and prolific letter writers—and have since been deluged by their commentaries! In the meantime, however, thanks to the fine folks at *Amazing Heroes* and the *Comics Buyer's Guide*—not to mention Comico's very own Director of Public Relations, Bob Schreck—the advance publicity on JONNY resulted in the following two letters which we received before the first issue was even completed!

Dear Comico,

I read in the *Amazing Heroes Preview* that Comico is going to publish a JONNY QUEST comic. As a kid I looked forward to the cartoon, and now, as an adult, JONNY QUEST is still one of my favorites. Like ROBOTECH, will the JONNY QUEST book follow the TV episodes?

Sincerely,
David McManus
Butler, PA

—As you can probably tell by now, David, while attempting to maintain the spirit of the original series, Comico is nonetheless publishing brand new QUEST stories, thanks to the gifted pen of writer Bill Loeb. Of course, if you and other readers are interested in seeing adaptations, be sure to let us know and we'll see what we can do.

Diana,

This is a thank you letter, of sorts, directed at both you and the good folks at Comico for your decision to publish JONNY QUEST (not JOHNNY, as one fanzine had it), a comic based upon the exploits of an animated character that I've been watching, off and on, for some twenty-two years now.

He began his adventures in 1964—the same year that I began following them. We shared something else in common, as well—we were both eleven years old. The following years seem to have been a lot kinder to him, but I suppose that's

one of the advantages to being a cartoon character. (Of course, there are disadvantages as well, such as not being able to step out for a cold Moosehead and a deep dish with the works!)

Seriously, though, all the best to your project—I'm being purely selfish here, you understand, seeing that it concerns something that has a special place in my heart—my secret one, the one that never truly grows up—along with TARRAN, THE SPIRIT, and all those great TERRY AND THE PIRATES strips that my grandfather collected for years, and which I spent many afternoons reading over and over again.

I don't have those TERRY AND THE PIRATES strips, alas. The years went by, and they got lost in the shuffle. But in one of my book rooms, sandwiched within a very long box containing my JON SABLEs and my JUDGE DREDDs, I have a well-worn copy of the one-shot JONNY QUEST that Gold Key released twenty-two years ago. I paid twelve cents for it new, and I've certainly gotten my money's worth out of it since. It's nice to know that it'll soon have company.

Yours,
Virgil W. Ferguson
Georgetown, KY

P.S. If you haven't already come up with a name for the letters page, how about QUESTions and Answers? It's the best that I could come up with at six in the morning . . .

—No sooner said than done, Virgil, and as you can see, six o'clock in the morning notwithstanding, our next correspondent had the same idea . . .

Diana—

You know how great you feel when some old friends you grew up with, yet haven't seen in quite a while, show up at your doorstep without one single bit of advance notice? Well, such was the exact same feeling that coursed through me as I read the special sneak peek copy of JONNY QUEST #1 that you so graciously sent to me.

Both stories in the first issue were chock-full of the brand of action and adventure that has come to be the trademark of young Jonny Quest, and, if you expect me to single out one of these two stories as my favorite, I'm afraid I can't help you. Both were awesome.

However, if you want my honest opinion on the pin-ups, my favorite was Wheatley and Hempel's rendition of Race, Jonny, and Bandit. Willingham and Austin's page was also very sharp, but Wheatley and Hempel's cartoony style was more reminiscent of the television series.

Finally, as good as this material looks now, I can't wait to see how it looks after Matt Wagner gets through with it. (For my money, Matt's the best colorist in current comicdom. Period.) See ya.

Elvis Orten

Dawson Springs, KY

P.S. If you need a lettercol title, may I suggest QUESTions and Answers?

—Thanks, Elvis, and be sure to stick around for JQ #3, wherein we present a full 28-page story illustrated by Marc Hempel, Mark Wheatley, and Kathryn Mayer.

Dear Editor:

At last, JONNY QUEST! You have no idea how long I have waited for Jonny to surface in some form.

Over the years I have spoken to many comic book pros and one subject that always comes up is JONNY QUEST. In the past I've talked to Steve Rude, Ron Frenz, Mike Baron, Terry Austin, and Tim Truman. They have all talked about wanting to do a JONNY QUEST story. In the case of Steve and Terry, it looks like they've got their wish.

Needless to say, I read the issue as soon as it came in the mail. Doug Wildey is back doing what he does best . . . JONNY QUEST! It was so nice to see Doug's art on the modern day boy wonder. The pacing and panel layouts were top notch. The story had the flavor of Milton Caniff's STEVE CANYON. The dialogue was real, not stilted. The story had me on the edge of my seat, like a good movie would. All the people involved were in character and true to their screen versions. I liked that!

Bill Loeb and Steve Rude did a bang-up job on the second story. The art was so clear and detailed. I can hardly wait to see the book in color. I'm quite sure that Matt Wagner did a fantastic job on the colors. Mike Royer is a fine inker in the fact that he can "blend" in with almost any penciller. He never overpowers the people that he works with. I'm sure Steve thanks him for that. The pin-up pages were great! I hope to see more in the future.

continued . . .

All in all, I can say that this issue of JONNY QUEST was a true work of love. That's the feeling that I received from reading it. Thank you very much for making an "old-timer" happy.

Stay outta trouble—

Stephen Scott Beau Smith
Huntington, WV

Dear Questers,

Thanks muchly for the advance photocopy of JQ #1. I must say that the news of a JONNY QUEST comic book took me by surprise. While the show certainly has its following, I didn't think it had either the cult following or current visibility necessary to jump-start a successful run in comics. Still, what I don't know about TV cartoons would fill a book, and a good concept should be able to stand on its own, so you might have hit on a real winner despite my above misgivings.

The first thing that struck me when reading "The Sands of Khasa Tahid" was: What's this little kid doing, being allowed to wander around the desert? What occasioned no thoughts on those Saturday mornings not so long ago now seems a bit of a problem. Jonny is not in school, he wanders all over the world, and he is consistently put in great danger. What child welfare agency worth its salt would allow this to happen? Also, Jonny doesn't see much of his father, but is left in the hands of an employee. More likely, Jonny would be in some exclusive boarding school somewhere, yearning to be out on the road with his father. And how does Hadji fit into this scenario? Food for thought.

Somehow, the stories did not have a modern feel to them. They seemed closer to STEVE CANYON post-World War II adventures than even to the '60s milieu in which Jonny is rooted. Perhaps some of this had to do with the mysterious-but-unspecified "eastern" locale.

In "City of Time Lost," I thought a good concept was passed over too quickly. To have treasure hunters and others from past centuries all together in those ruins is an intriguing concept and could have been used for several more worthwhile stories.

All in all, it was a good effort, nicely evoking some of the feel of the TV series. However, I feel you should take account of the medium and use the comic book to explore some of the nuances of characterization, some of the quiet moments, and not necessarily so much of the bang bang action.

Yours truly,

"T. M. Maple"

Weston, Ontario, Canada

—Well, T.M., hope this issue has helped give you some of the quiet moments and character nuances you're looking for. And as to the potential concerns of some child welfare agency, be with us in issue #7 when Bill Loeb and Dan Spiegle tackle the Department of Social Services and "The Lady in Gray"!

Diana & Company:

I was both truly lucky and inspired enough to write after receiving an advance copy of JONNY QUEST #1. As a self-proclaimed premiere fan of JQ, I've

been uneasily awaiting your comic and the new episodes being produced by H-B, hoping that they'd live up to my memories of the original. In the case of the comic, there's no question; you've done it.

Both Doug Wildey's "The Sands of Khasa Tahid" and Loeb's and Rude's "City of Time Lost" were excellent adventure stories that lived up to the high standards of the series without being openly imitative of any particular episode. It's been over twenty years, but everybody was perfectly in character (though we didn't even hear a whimper out of Bandit) and beautifully and accurately depicted (should I assume artists are given animation model sheets for reference?). And considering the poor excuses so many creators give for not doing research, I was most impressed with the attention to detail given to the machines, ruins and "real world" gadgets. Altogether, #1 was a superlative effort.

And though I enjoyed #1, I have to wonder about future issues and how JQ will be adapted to the '80s (except for references to terrorists, "Khassa Tahid" could have taken place in 1965). JONNY QUEST itself was more or less an updating of the radio program, Jack Armstrong, The All American Boy, and ultimately JQ will have to thrive on more than its nostalgia value.

For instance, though the hallmark of the original series was its "real world" gadgets and applications of scientific principles, it was just as noted for its more fantastic elements (the giant robot spider, the energy monster, etc.). It constantly walked a thin line between science and pseudo "super" science, usually pitting these fantastic menaces against the Quest Team's brain power (and what resources were available). This delicate balance would be disrupted if, say, the Quest Team were faced with an alien invasion, or sent back in time.

Which is why I was faintly disturbed by the pin-up of Jonny and Bandit being menaced by a "giant robot" (okay, it was a "mobile battle suit" if you want to get technical about it). My first reaction was that such things were inappropriate to the world of JQ, but then remembered that scientists have been working on less sensational exo-skeletons for at least twenty years. So, though I'd love to see a story in a realistically depicted Japan where Jonny was trapped behind the "wheel" of such an exo-suit (all the better to explode the clichés of that popular genre), I wouldn't want such things to become commonplace in JONNY QUEST.

And though I'm impressed with the released list of future contributors, I, of course, have a few suggestions: Tim Truman (avowed JQ fan), Tom Yeates, Steve Bissette (on a dinosaur and/or monster story, of course), Dan Spiegle and Jim Aparo (both of whom would have been perfect for the series, if there had been a regular JQ comic in the '60s). All those artists (did I mention Jerry Ordway? Will Meugniot?) are highly skilled at such exotic items in current comics as human beings, furniture, cars, etc. Oops! Completely forgot Kerry Gammit.

Thanks again for thinking of me.

Yours,

S. A. Bennett
Akron, OH

P.S. I recognize such a title would undoubtedly have to be connected to a new cartoon series, but consider this a great big yes for a SPACE GHOST comic, if only a special (48 pages by Steve Rude telling his untold origin story might be nice).

—Sounds great to us, S. A. How about it, Steve?

Dear Diana,

It's been like old home week around here these past few weeks. NBC dished out *Return to Mayberry* the other night and damn if it wasn't just plain fun to see Sheriff Andy again and little Opie and of course the ever lovable bumbling deputy, Barney Fife. Yet time had taken its toll, and Opie was now married and his wife about ready to give birth to their first offspring. Andy Taylor had moved out of town and was a postal official in the big city. Nothing stays the same.

Then Comico delivers to my mail box the unexpected bonus of the first new issue of JONNY QUEST. I was a high school junior when the series first debuted. I was a faithful watcher right from the start, never missing an episode. They were always jammed packed with action and exotic locales with just the right pinch of comic relief.

It's hard to believe that you could capture that feel so perfectly all these years later and in a comic book. But you did. From Doug Wildey's story straight through the neat pin-ups at the end, you captured it all just as my memory recalled. Jonny with his clean cut all-American features and gung ho attitude. Hadji, as unpredictable and loyal as always. The stodgy Prof. Quest ever caught up in some new and fantastic expedition to ensnare them all in some glorious adventure. Finally, the model of all chisel-chinned, true-heart heroes, Race Bannon. Watching Race in action, it was totally impossible to believe there was any situation he could not handle nor any threat overcome.

The art throughout was exceptional. I particularly enjoyed Mike Royer's clean inks over Steve Rude's terrific pencils. They make a great team. As I've already mentioned, the stories themselves were exactly of the high standards one came to expect from the television episodes. Yet something still nags at my total acceptance of the project. Maybe it's the fact that so many damn years have come and gone and the real world changed, like it or not.

I grew up and Jonny didn't. Like Harlan Ellison's character, Jeffy, he stayed the same and maybe that is why I love/hate him with all my heart.

Good luck,

Ron Fortier
Somersworth, NH

Join us next issue as the Quest team is called to South America to stop the flow of guns to a revolutionary cadre, in "Guns for the Laughing Man."

—Diana Schutz



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